

## Article, May 19, 1966

### **ORIGINAL DRAWING OF THE TELEPHONE by ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL**

I found in the AGB correspondence a photograph of the drawing of the Telephone with the following written in Dr. AGB's handwriting—

“Boston, Mass. to Miss Frances R. Symonds, May 21, 1876 from AGB. To my knowledge, this is my first drawing of the telephone. AGB.”

Soon after, I located a letter from Melbourne, Australia, dated June 30, 1889, addressed to Dr. Bell as follows:—

“My dear Cousin:

The pencil illustration of the telephone which you may recollect giving to Frances when in Boston I have had framed between two glasses so both sides can be read and I had some idea of sending it to our National Museum but have been persuaded to keep it in the family.”

Henry J. Lapastrier.”

The will of Eliza Grace Symonds Bell (mother of AGB) reads solicitors of the Symonds family in Australia were Messrs. Lynch and McDonald. American Security and Trust produced the address of this firm. Then began a lengthy correspondence from The Bell Room.

When Dr. and Mrs. made their World Trip in 1910–11 they looked up the Symonds Family. Henry and Frances Symonds Lapastrier had died but they visited their daughter

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Mrs. Fred Winston (Bessie Lapastrier). Dr. Bell wrote in his Home Notes (diaries) of the fine hospitality of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Winston, while in Melbourne.

Mr. J. J. Kenny of Lynch and McDonald found that Mrs. Winston had moved to Cessnock, New South Wales and her solicitors were Cleaves and Cleaves, Box 59, Cessnock, New South Wales. so— Dr. GHG sent Mr. Kenny an Atlas in appreciation for his help in locating Mrs. Winston and yes, she had the original drawing of the telephone. After several letters to this firm we finally heard from them that Mrs. Winston did not know the value of the drawing and wanted to know the terms for which we would like the drawing.

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Dr. Carmichael kindly got the valuation for us at the Smithsonian but Dr. GHG had to be consulted and we had to wait for his return from Beinn Bhreagh to ask his wishes in the matter. Mr. Arens took care of the matter from then on.

My letters of November 16th and again on January 19, 1965 informing Mrs. Winston of the amount Dr. GHG would give for the drawing, remained unanswered. I knew she was quite old and might die before we could obtain the drawing. Mr. Arens asked Howell Walker to see Mrs. Winston on his trip to Australia. With his grace and charming manner there was no trouble. So thanks to Mr. Walker we are now in possession of this valuable drawing. Mr. Walker informed us that Mrs. Winston is 82 and her husband is 95. They are in reduced circumstances or would have made us a presentation of the drawing without remuneration.

All correspondence regarding the necessary sleuthing to obtain this drawing is in The Bell Room.

vc. 5/19/66